



Fact Sheet

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCIES | www.CaWaterQuality.net

Are California's Streams and Rivers Healthy?

Monitoring Council delivers fourth "My Water Quality" Internet portal

Overview

The California Water Quality Monitoring Council (Monitoring Council) is unveiling its fourth My Water Quality internet portal to connect decision makers and the public with water quality and ecosystem health information. The theme of this new portal is "Are Our Stream and River Ecosystems Healthy?" View the new portal from California's My Water Quality website, www.CaWaterQuality.net, under "Are Our Aquatic Ecosystems Healthy?"

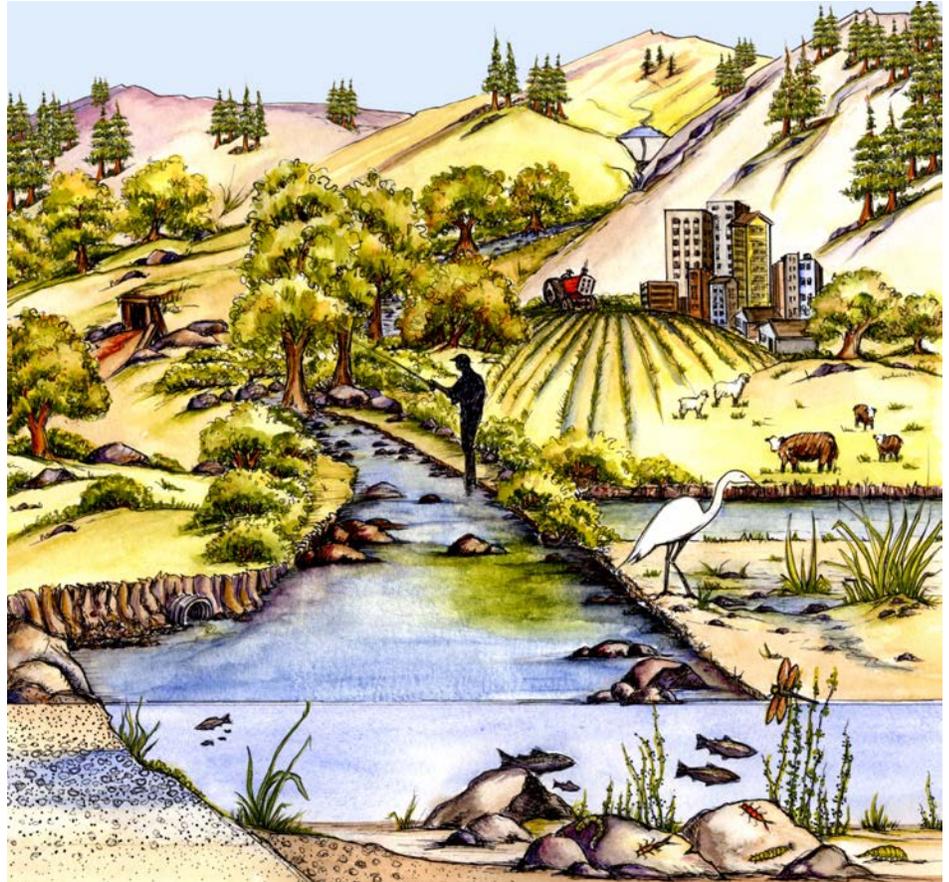
The new California Streams and Rivers Portal includes interactive maps and monitoring data that focus on the location, extent and health of the state's streams and rivers. A novel home page graphic provides insight into the myriad of factors that make a healthy stream. The goal is to make this information as timely and user-friendly as possible.

Why Are Healthy Streams and Rivers Important?

Streams and rivers perform numerous functions and provide important services to society. They are the source of much of the water supply for California's cities, farms, and industries. At the same time, they provide essential habitat for fish and wildlife, including threatened and endangered species as well as commercially important species. The attractiveness of our streams and rivers make them the focus of many recreational activities. They are an important component of the California landscape.

But the health of many California streams has declined. Water diverted for cities and agriculture leaves less for fish and wildlife. Construction of dams, levees, and drainage canals and the introduction of non-native species and pollution harm critical habitat and lessening the ability of our streams to provide other societal benefits.

The new California Streams and Rivers portal brings this information together in a single location and in an easy to understand manner for the public, environmental organizations, and water quality professionals.



Why Was This New Tool Developed?

In 2006, the California legislature mandated coordination of water quality monitoring and assessment activities among organizations, both inside and outside California government, and delivery of this information to decision makers and the public via the internet. The Monitoring Council was formed in 2007 by cooperative agreement between the California Environmental Protection Agency and the Natural Resources Agency for this purpose. In 2009, the Monitoring Council released its first two internet portals, *Is it Safe to Swim in Our Waters?* and *Is it Safe to Eat Fish and Shellfish from Our Waters?* In 2010 the California Wetlands portal was added. More portals are planned highlighting California's tidepools, estuaries, and drinking water resources.

The Monitoring Council brings together water quality and ecosystem health information from a variety of organizations with special expertise in stream and river monitoring and assessment, coordinated through the California Healthy Streams Partnership. State, federal, and regional agencies and non-governmental organizations have pitched in to answer your water quality questions.

How Do I Get More Information?

More information about the Monitoring Council and its expert stakeholder work groups is on the web at http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/.



State of California
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
CALIFORNIA WATER QUALITY MONITORING COUNCIL

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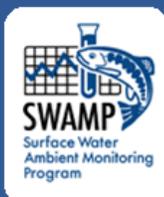
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My Water Quality | Monitoring Council | This site is hosted by the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) |



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Welcome to My Water Quality

This web portal, supported by a wide variety of public and private organizations, presents California water quality monitoring data and assessment information that may be viewed across space and time. Initial web portal development concentrates on four theme areas, with web portals to be released one at a time. Click the [Contact Us](#) tab for more information.

The Monitoring Council seeks to provide multiple perspectives on water quality information and to highlight existing data gaps and inconsistencies in data collection and interpretation, thereby identifying areas for needed improvement in order to better address the public's questions. Questions and comments should be addressed through the [Contact Us](#) tab.



IS OUR WATER SAFE TO DRINK?

Safe drinking water depends on a variety of chemical and biological factors regulated by a number of local, state, and federal agencies. [\[Future Portal\]](#)



IS IT SAFE TO SWIM IN OUR WATERS?

Swimming safety of our waters is linked to the levels of pathogens that have the potential to cause disease. [More >>](#)



IS IT SAFE TO EAT FISH AND SHELLFISH FROM OUR WATERS?

Aquatic organisms are able to accumulate certain pollutants from the water in which they live, sometimes reaching levels that could harm consumers. [More>>](#)



ARE OUR AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS HEALTHY?

The health of fish and other aquatic organisms and communities depends on the chemical, physical, and biological quality of the waters in which they live. [More>>](#)



WHAT STRESSORS AND PROCESSES AFFECT OUR WATER QUALITY?

Beneficial uses of our waters are affected by emerging contaminants, invasive species, trash, global warming, acidification, pollutant loads, and flow. [\[Future Portal\]](#)